

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

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**Official Eligibility Determination
(OAHF use only)**

OAHF1403

Rev. 9/98

Date _____ Initials _____

- ☐ Determined Eligible – National Register
☐ Determined Not Eligible – National Register
☐ Determined Eligible – State Register
☐ Determine Not Eligible – State Register
☐ Need Data
☐ Contributes to eligible National Register District
☐ Noncontributing to eligible National Register District

I. IDENTIFICATION

1. Resource number: **5SM.1658**
 2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**
 3. County: **San Miguel**
 4. City: **Telluride**
 5. Historic Building Name: **Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot**
 6. Current Building Name: **Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot**
 7. Building Address: **300 S. Townsend Street**
 8. Owner Name and Address: **The AH HAA School For the Arts
P. O. Box 1590
Telluride, CO 81435**

Parcel number(s):

477901208030

44. National Register eligibility field assessment:
Local landmark eligibility field assessment:

Individually Eligible / Contributing to NHL
Eligible / Contributing to District

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II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **New Mexico** Township: **42N** Range: **9W**
 $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 1
10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)
 Zone: **13** **252556 mE** **4202346 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Telluride, Colorado**
 Year: **1955** Map scale: **7.5'**
12. Lot(s): **Lot 2**
 Addition: **Denver and Rio Grand Southern Railroad Depot, S side of Depot Avenue at S. end of Townsend St.**
 Year of addition: **unknown**
13. Boundary description and justification:
This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **Length: 110 feet x Width: 34 feet**
16. Number of stories: **1 1/2**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Wood/Vertical Siding**
18. Roof configuration: **Gabled Roof/Side Gabled Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Wood Roof/Shingle Roof**
20. Special features: **Roof Treatment/Dormer**
Chimney
Roof Treatment/Finial
21. General architectural description:
The Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot in Telluride is a well-proportioned, generally rectangular-shaped, building which measures approximately 34' N-S by 110' E-W. Rehabilitated after years of neglect, the building was rededicated in December 1991, and its appearance is unchanged from that time to the present (2007).
- The building is supported by a concrete foundation, with a basement level beneath at least part of the main level. A long flight of concrete stairs descend to a grey steel utility door which enters the basement level on the east elevation. Much of the building is surrounded by a wood deck or platform. Above the platform, the lower portion of the first story walls are clad with brown bead board, while the upper portion of the first story walls are clad with painted cream yellow horizontal wood siding with painted brown 1" by 4" corner boards. Painted cream yellow square-cut wood shingles appear in the upper gable ends on the east and west elevations. The name "TELLURIDE" is painted in block letters in each upper gable end. The depot is covered by a moderately-pitched side gable roof, with an intersecting gable on the south elevation, and with a large, prominent, steeply-pitched hip-roofed dormer on the north elevation. This dormer is clad with painted cream yellow square-cut wood shingles, and its roof is topped by a finial. The dormer is penetrated by five 1/1 double-hung sash windows, with painted maroon wood frames and painted brown wood surrounds. The roof of the building itself is covered with wood shingles, and the eaves are boxed with painted cream yellow and brown wood trim. Three large brick chimneys are located along the roof ridge.**

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The depot's north elevation faces toward the T intersection of Townsend Street and Depot Avenue. From east-to-west, this elevation is penetrated by the following doors and windows: a set of paired wood-paneled doors with diagonal bead board panels and with single lights in their upper sashes; two 2/2 double-hung sash windows; a set of paired 2/2 double-hung sash windows, covered by a shed roof extension with curved brackets; a stepped-out section beneath the large hip-roofed dormer which contains an east-facing, narrow, stained brown, wood-paneled door with an upper sash light and a 2-light transom (this is the main entry into the depot); two 2/2 double-hung sash windows, and one 1/1 double-hung sash window, also covered by the shed roof extension with curved brackets; a presently non-functional painted cream yellow door with diagonal bead board panels, two upper sash lights, and a 6-light transom; another set of paired wood-paneled doors with diagonal bead board panels, upper sash lights, an 8-light transom, and flanking 2/2 double-hung sash windows.

The west elevation is penetrated by a narrow wood-paneled door, located within a former garage door opening which has been closed off. This door is flanked by a sidelight, and features diagonal bead board panels and a 6-light transom.

The south elevation traditionally faced the railroad tracks, and is now oriented toward a professionally landscaped patio and natural area which extends to a pedestrian trail paralleling the San Juan River. From east-to-west, this elevation is penetrated by the following doors and windows: A set of paired wood-paneled doors with diagonal bead board panels, and upper sash lights, Two single wood-paneled doors, each with an upper sash light; two 2/2 double-hung sash windows; a large rectangular gable-roofed bay, with two 2/2 double-hung sash windows, and two 1/1 double-hung sash windows; a wood-paneled door with one upper sash light and a 4-light transom; a non-functional, painted cream yellow wood-paneled door (located directly opposite the identical non-functional door on the north elevation); two 2/2 double-hung sash windows; a set of paired, painted cream yellow, wood-paneled doors; a set of paired 2/2 double-hung sash windows. (The two doors and a window near the east end of this elevation are covered by a shed roof with curved brackets.)

The east elevation is penetrated by two 2/2 double-hung sash windows, and by a square 12-light window in the upper gable end.

All of the depot's windows feature painted maroon wood frames and painted brown wood surrounds.

22. Architectural style: **No Defined Style**
Building type:
23. Landscape or special setting features: **The Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot in Telluride is located at the southern end of Townsend Street, just south of the "T" intersection of Townsend Street and Depot Avenue. The San Juan River flows generally east-to-west a short distance south of the depot. A professionally-landscaped patio and natural area extends from the depot's south (rear) elevation to join a walking trail which parallels the river. This location is near the southeastern corner of the Telluride National Historic Landmark District.**
24. Associated buildings, features or objects: **N/A**

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IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of construction: Estimate: 1891 Actual:
Source of information: Sanborn Insurance maps; Simmons, Laurie and Christine Whitacre. Historic Building Inventory Record Form, May 1886.
26. Architect: Unknown
Source of information: N/A
27. Builder: Unknown
Source of information: N/A
28. Original owner: Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad
Source of information: Simmons, Laurie and Christine Whitacre. "Historic Building Inventory Record Form," May 1886.
29. Construction history:
The Denver and Southern Rio Grande Railroad Depot in Telluride was built circa 1891, with the arrival of Otto Mears' railroad which connected with the Denver and Rio Grande at Ridgeway. The building stood largely as originally built, eventually falling into disuse and allowed to deteriorate, until it was extensively renovated in the early 1990s.
30. Original location: ☒ Moved: Date of move(s):

V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): Transportation/Depot
32. Intermediate use(s): Vacant/Not in Use
33. Current use(s): Education, Education/School/School
34. Site type(s): Historically the Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot in Telluride.
Presently occupied by "AH HAA School for the Arts," a non profit entity.
35. Historical background:
The Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad arrived in Telluride circa 1891, connecting the isolated mining town to the Denver and Rio Grande Railway at Ridgeway. Before long, the line was extended south to Durango. When Telluride's mining activities were at their peak in the 1890s and early 1900s, the railroad prospered, and Telluride became a key rail center for both passenger and freight service. By 1930, though, both the town and the railroad were in decline. A year or so later, Jack Odenpaugh, the railroad's chief mechanic, created the "Galloping Geese," a fleet of six narrow gauge railroad cars attached to modified gasoline-powered trucks, with Cadillac, Buick, Winton, or Pierce Arrow engines. The small fleet of "geese" was intended to carry both passengers and freight, including mail; for the most part, however, the "Geese" carried tourists. The small fleet went out of service circa 1950, marking the end of the railroad era.
- A plaque, placed near the depot in 1991, presents the following concise narrative, written by Richard L. Dorman, relating the building's history:

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The Depot

The Rio Grande Southern Railroad came to this enchanting area, surrounded by towering grey granite mountains, in 1891. The railroad provided a much-needed life line between the mountain mining communities and the smelters, located in the valleys far away.

The depot was built in the early 1890s, with additions made to the building over the years to handle the growing traffic. Two passenger trains a day, along with the constant freight traffic, were handled by the depot.

A picturesque structure, the depot is beautifully proportioned and unusual in architectural appearance - different from other Rio Grande Southern stations. This historic structure honoring the integrity of the Rio Grande Southern Railroad is now preserved and maintained. The tower, striking in appearance, faced the town and beckoned to all who came her way. Never again will we see engines such as the ten wheelers, consolidations or mikados, scurrying past on her tracks.

A new era of transportation has replaced the steam train. Although the names are different and the modes have changed, this depot still serves as a place of welcome and hospitality for Telluride and the San Juan Mountain Range.

In the summer of 2007, the depot became the new home for the AH HAA School for the Arts, "a [Telluride] community center of learning and culture that offers a wide variety of programs and seeks to inspire individuals of all ages to explore, develop and celebrate their creativity."

36. Sources of information:

Buys, Christian J. *Historic Telluride in Rare Photographs*. Ouray: Western Reflections, Inc., 1998.

Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy, DPL Western History Photos database.

<http://www.photoswest.org>

Dorman, Richard L. Author of plaque narrative, 1991.

Pera, Davine (comp.). *Conversations at 9,000 Feet A Collection of Oral Histories From Telluride, Colorado*. Ouray: Western Reflections Publishing Company, 2000.

San Miguel County Assessor records.

San Miguel County Property Appraisal Record.

Sanborn Insurance maps, August 1886, October 1890, February 1893, December 1899, July 1904, November 1908, October 1922.

Simmons, Laurie and Whitacre, Christine. Historic Building Inventory Record, May 1986.

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VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: Yes No ☒ Date of designation:

Designating authority:

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

- ☒ A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- ☒ C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.
- Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).
- Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Telluride Standards for Designation:

- 7-505.A.1. The structure is representative of a unique historical social activity of an era
- ☒ 7-505.A.2. The structure dominates the neighborhood by virtue of its mass, architecture or location
- ☒ 7-505.A.3. The structure was an historically or architecturally important public building
- ☒ 7-505.A.4. The structure has a unique historical significance beyond a local level
- ☒ 7-505.A.5. The parcel was the site of an important historic event or activity
- ☒ 7-505.A.6. The structure has a "contributing or qualified contributing" rating on the THAS

39. Area(s) of significance: **Architecture**
Transportation/Rail-related

40. Period of significance: **circa 1891; circa 1891-1950**

41. Level of significance: National: ☒ State: Local:

42. Statement of significance:

The Denver and Rio Grande Southern Railroad Depot in Telluride is historically significant for the singular role that it played in the region's socioeconomic development beginning in the early 1890s. The impact of the coming of the railroad can hardly be understated, as it greatly facilitated the transportation of both freight and passengers, relative to the earlier days of mule and ox-drawn freight lines. In its renovated condition, the Depot may be considered individually eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and it rates as a contributing resource within the Telluride National Historic Landmark District.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

As renovated in the early 1990s, the Denver and Southern Rio Grand Railroad Depot displays an overall high standard of physical integrity, relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation - setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A sense of time and place relative to how the depot appeared through the early 1900s is reasonably intact.

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VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Individually Eligible**
Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible / Contributing to District**
45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes ☒ No
- Discuss: **This property is located within the Telluride National Historic Landmark District.**
- If there is National Register district potential, is this building: Contributing Noncontributing N/A: ☒
46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it: Contributing ☒ Noncontributing N/A:

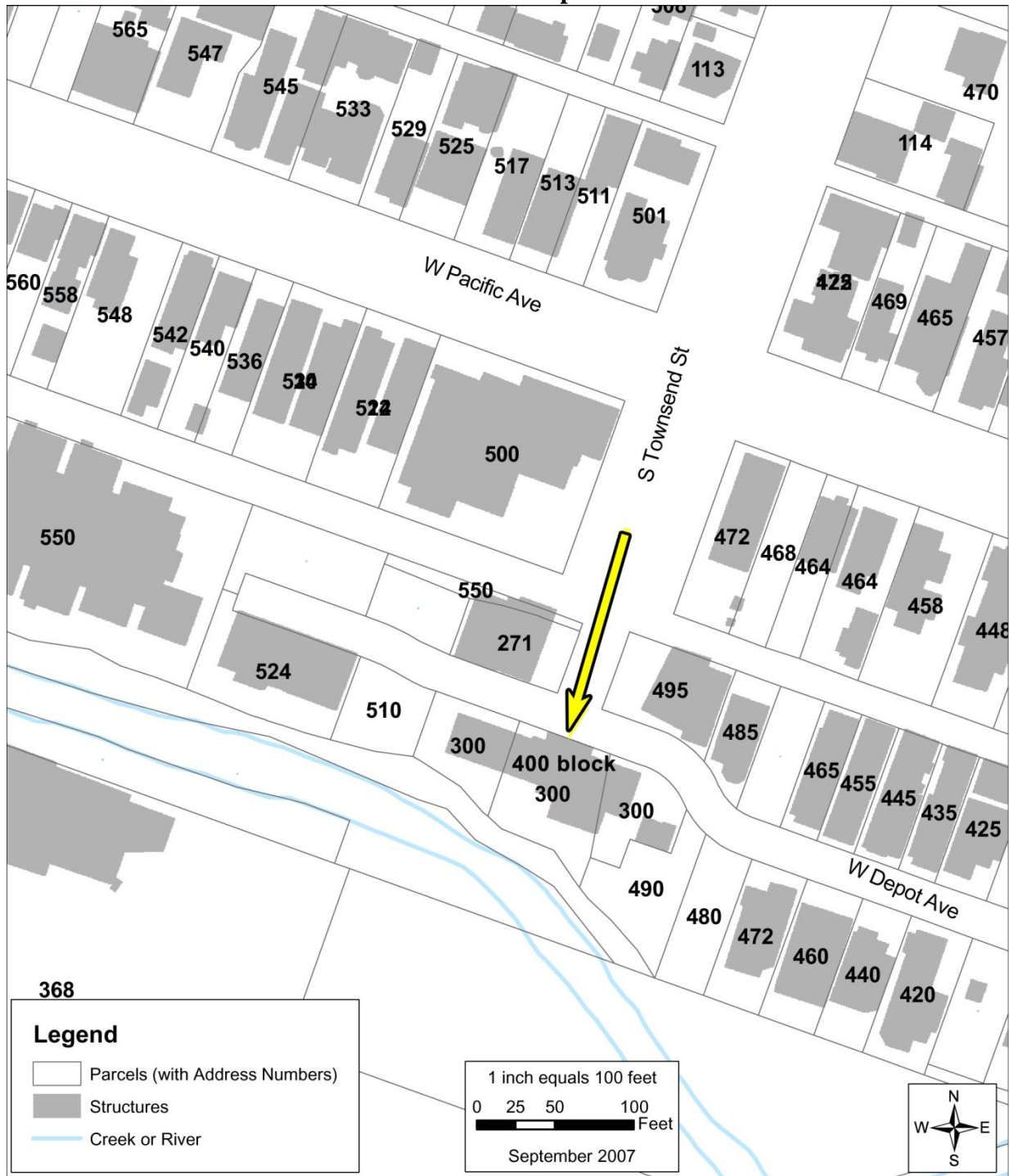
VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 47. Photograph number(s): | CD #7, Images 113-122 | CDs filed at: | Town of Telluride |
| 48. Report title: | Town of Telluride Re-Survey of Historic Structures | | Planning and Building Dept. |
| 49. Date(s): | 09/30/2007; revised 4/10/2012 | | 113 West Columbia Avenue |
| 50. Recorder(s): | Carl McWilliams | | Telluride, CO 81435 |
| | Timothy Wilder | | |
| 51. Organization: | Cultural Resource Historians | | |
| 52. Address: | Dogwood Court | | |
| | Fort Collins, CO 80525 | | |
| 53. Phone number(s): | (970) 493-5270 | | |

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Sketch Map



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Location Map

